

WE WELCOME YOU TO THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND HOPE THAT YOU WILL FIND JURY SERVICE INTERESTING AND WORTHWHILE. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ASK A JURY CLERK IF YOU NEED ADDITIONAL HELP OR INFORMATION.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION
PLEASE READ BEFORE CALLING THE JURY OFFICE

What is the first thing I am required to do?

A red and white Juror Qualification Questionnaire is in your packet. Please fill out the questionnaire and return it to the Jury Office within ten days. The Jury Office will then enter your information into the database, and will use this information to respond to any inquiries you have regarding jury duty, to include the type of summons you were issued (in the case of “special” jury selections) , or any requests to be excused or deferred from jury service. We are severely limited in our ability to assist you if we do not have updated information in our system.

How will I know what time and which days to report for jury service?

A reporting time will NOT be printed on your summons. This Court uses an automated telephone system to schedule jurors. The telephone call in system will not work for you unless you have returned your questionnaire, and it has been entered into the database. *You must not call the automated phone system until after 5:00 p.m. on the evening before your first reporting date. The automated phone system number is 354-3518.* The automated system will ask you to punch in the **nine digit number located just above your name and address on your summons.** (If you do not have a touch tone telephone, please call the jury office at 354-3360 for instructions at 8:00 a.m., the next business day.) If you are required to report, the message will list your reporting time. If you are not required to report, the recording will instruct you to call again at a specified time.

IT IS POSSIBLE THAT YOU WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO REPORT ON YOUR FIRST DAY OF JURY DUTY. Therefore it is very important that you call the automated phone system the evening before your first reporting date, after 5:00 p.m. for instructions. You will be required to call the automated phone system every evening after 5:00 p.m. during your two- week term of service. If you report to the Court in error, the Court will not pay you or give you credit for that day’s attendance. Information is not available to jurors until after 5:00 p.m., therefore, please do not call the recording before 5:00 p.m.

How can I request to be deferred or excused from jury service?

After you have completed the questionnaire, you may request to be deferred or excused in the remarks section on the back of your questionnaire, or you may submit a letter WITH your questionnaire. Please be as detailed as possible regarding deferral or excuse requests. All written requests to be excused are brought before the Chief Judge. Regular deferrals are processed by the Jury Office. If you request a deferral or excuse, you may call the automated phone system (354-3518) beginning ten days prior to the reporting date on your summons. Punch in your nine-digit number to verify if your request has been granted.

How was I selected for petit jury service?

A computer draws juror names at random from a combined voter registration , driver's (and non-driver's) license, and D.C. tax forms list. If you have served as a juror in D.C. Superior Court, you can still be called for jury duty by the U.S. District Court. Once you have served as a juror in the U.S. District Court, you will not be required to serve again in the U.S. District Court for at least two years.

How do I get to the U.S. District Court located at the E. Barrett Prettyman Courthouse?

The U.S. District Court is located at 333 Constitution Avenue, NW. We encourage you to use public transportation because metered parking is often difficult to find near the courthouse. The Metro stop at Judiciary Square (located on the Red Line) is only a few blocks from the courthouse.

Will I be compensated for jury duty?

Checks with attendance listed on the stub will be mailed three weeks after your term of service. **Non-government jurors are paid \$40.00 per day of service. Jurors who are employed by either the Federal or D.C. Government will continue to receive their regular paychecks. All jurors will receive transportation allowance of \$4.00 per day. Employers may call the jury office for verification of service at 354-3360.**

What are the procedures for inclement weather?

In the event of inclement weather conditions, jurors may call 354-3000 (main number to the courthouse) to receive information about whether the courthouse will be open or closed.

On the days I am not asked to report for jury duty, should I return to work?

Yes. The Court can only pay you or give you credit for the days that you are required at the courthouse. On all days when your attendance is not required, you should report to your regular job. Your check will have a stub reflecting the days you reported. We suggest that you retain or make copies of your stub as proof of service.

How many days will I be on jury duty?

The number of days that you will serve varies according to the trial schedule and the number of trials on which you are selected. You may be selected for both criminal and civil cases during your term of service. The average juror serves approximately 3-6 days during a two week term of service.

Should I telephone the recorded message when serving on a trial?

No. After you have been selected to serve on a particular trial, you should follow the instructions of the trial judge about days and times of attendance. When the trial for which you are serving is completed, you should contact the Jury Office.

What should I do in case of an emergency regarding my Jury Duty?

You should call the Jury Office at 354-3360.

What procedure will be followed each day?

1. You will check in with a jury clerk in Room 4214. Check-in time varies.
2. A "panel" or group of jurors is sent to the courtroom of each judge who has a trial scheduled that day when the judge is ready.
3. From each panel sent to a courtroom, certain jurors will be selected after responding to a number of questions. All jurors not selected will return to the jury lounge and must check in with a jury clerk for possible selection on other cases. If no other cases are scheduled that day, you will be dismissed.
4. On some days, a trial may be canceled at the last moment due to unforeseen circumstances and you may be dismissed on those days without ever going into a courtroom.

How many hours will I be at the courthouse each day?

The number of hours you spend at the courthouse will vary each day that you are here. If you are not serving on a trial, reporting time varies, but it is usually 8:30 a.m. or 9:00 a.m. Lunch is usually at 12 p.m. You will be dismissed for the day when all jury needs for that day have been met. This may be as early as 11:00 a.m. or as late as 5:00 p.m. If serving on a trial, the judge will set your arrival, lunch, and departure times. Be sure to be on time, both in the morning and after lunch. This is particularly important when serving on a trial since the entire trial proceeding can be delayed because of the tardiness of one juror.

Will there be long periods of waiting in the jury lounge?

Because pretrial proceedings can often delay the start of a trial, there are inevitable periods of waiting in the jury lounge. The Court has tried to provide comfortable facilities for jurors during lengthy waiting periods. Please remember that the courthouse is a smoke-free building.

Jury Lounge Facilities:

The jury lounge has restrooms, telephones, television sets, reading materials, vending machines, microwave oven and refrigerator.

Food Service:

The courthouse has a full service cafeteria that is open from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Health Unit:

The Health Unit is located on the first floor in Room 1612.

May I leave the jury lounge at any time?

No. Please do not leave the jury lounge unless excused by a jury clerk. Jury panels are called to courtrooms on a moment's notice and jurors must always be within hearing distance. Please do not go into any other courtrooms while you are on jury duty.

What should I wear to court?

Appropriate dress is required. The courtrooms are generally very cool, you may want to bring a sweater or jacket.

What is the difference between the U.S. District Court and the D.C. Superior Court?

The U.S. District Court is a Federal court that has jurisdiction over cases arising under Federal law, or when the U.S. government is a party, while the D.C. Superior Court is the court of local jurisdiction.